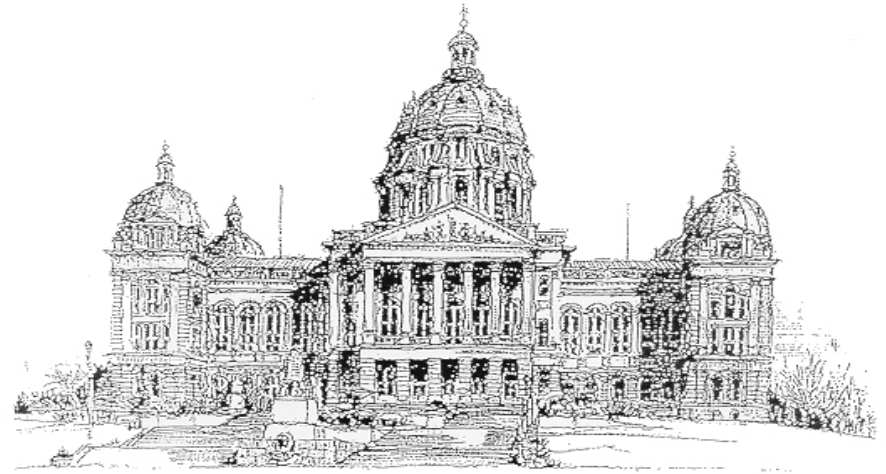


## STATE OF IOWA

### A COORDINATED COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO HATE CRIMES AND HATE ACTS TOOLKIT



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## COORDINATED COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO HATE CRIMES AND HATE ACTS

This booklet outlines a formal community response to hate crimes or hate acts towards persons or property in your area. You will find steps and procedures on how to work with law enforcement and organize a community response to ensure your safety and that of the victim.

### SOMEWHERE IN AMERICA

**Every hour ...**  
someone commits a hate crime.

**Every day ...**  
at least eight blacks, three whites, three gays, three Jews and one Latino become hate crime victims.

**Every week ...**  
a cross is burned.

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From: [www.tolerance.org](http://www.tolerance.org)

### COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO HATE CRIMES PROTOCOL

1. **PLAN AHEAD--** Ahead of time, and before the surfacing of any hate crime or hate act, local communities should establish community response teams to respond to hate crimes or hate acts, groups could be new or existing diversity appreciation teams, community roundtables, or community response teams.
2. **WHEN IT HAPPENS--** Report a hate crime or hate act to: Law Enforcement Officials (The local Police Department, Department of Public Safety, and the County Sheriff's Office) and your local Human Rights Commission or State Civil Rights Commission:
  - a. For hate crimes, it is critical that the proper authorities are notified for law enforcement and prosecution

purposes. These are law enforcement functions. Local civil or human rights commissions are available after the proper authorities have taken action. You may also contact the closest NAACP office (515) 262-1931.

3. When a hate crime or hate acts surfaces, the community response team, as quickly as practical, should recommend what action(s) will be taken in conjunction with Law Enforcement and representatives of an existing Human or Civil Rights Commission. The team decides upon the method of carrying out a coordinated community response.
4. Members of other organizations with a similar purpose should be notified and asked to participate.
5. Call a Press Conference as soon as possible after the reported incident. Media outlets should be contacted and informed of the hate crime and of the time and place for reading a broad-based statement condemning the act. The statement should be endorsed by as many religious, community, business groups, or public officials as possible. If a further response is needed or undertaken the details of this action should also be provided.

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES INCLUDE

**Clean Up Project:** In cases where property is defaced or damaged, you can organize a clean up crew.

**Vigil:** Plan and hold a vigil close to the sight of the hate crime/act if possible and the crime lends itself to a vigil (i.e. Matthew Shepard).

**Editorial:** Prepare a suitable editorial reflecting concerns about the hate crime or hate act. Maintain a file of past written editorials (local, State, National or other Publications).

**Demonstration:** Organize a march or suitable demonstration to counter a hate-sponsored march or demonstration.

**Expressions of Sympathy:** An appropriate expression of sympathy should be sent to a victim.

**Court Hearing:** Members of the Community Response Team are encouraged to show up at local hate crime hearings. This expression of concern would ensure that the victim, judge, jury, prosecutor and defense would know that the local community cares about this issue.

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## DEFINITIONS

**Hate Crime** is a bias-motivated crime that is designed to frighten or harm an individual, because of their race, color, religion, ethnic background, sex, sexual orientation, political affiliation, age, and/or disability. Incidents can range from verbal intimidation and harassment, to damage and destruction of property, to physical violence - even murder. A Hate Crime must have a criminal act (i.e., Assault, Arson, Criminal Mischief, or Trespass) committed with the intent to violate the victim's rights.

**Hate Act** is a bias-motivated act, intended to cause grief and sorrow, however, it is not committed with a criminal act taking place. It is protected by the First Amendment's Free Speech clause.

**Iowa Laws** Iowa Hate Crimes Laws are based on a "penalty enhancement" concept. That is, if an Assault, Arson, Criminal Mischief, or Trespass is motivated by a bias against the victim based on one of the characteristics listed above, then the offender can receive a sentence that is one degree higher than the penalty for that offense that is not bias-motivated. Proof of the underlying criminal offense being committed with the intent to violate the person's civil rights is required. Iowa law also allows political subdivisions to enact ordinances that reasonably regulate the Time, Place, and Manner of the exercise of Constitutional rights.

**Federal Laws** Any crime that is Bias-motivated and intended to deprive a person or group of people of their Civil Rights can be prosecuted under federal law "Title 42 Section 1981 CIVIL RIGHTS". Federal law does not prevent or intend to prevent a State or political subdivision from exercising jurisdiction over any offense or prosecution of any State or Local Laws covered by this section, and will not start any action without written request from the Attorney General of the United States or one of the assistants, stating that it would be in the best interest of the United States for the federal Courts to handle and prosecute the case.

## Sample Mission & Purpose of Diversity Appreciation Teams

The (name of town) . Diversity Appreciation Team is a community based collaboration of area residents, representing all walks of life, working together to develop and implement a community plan to improve race relations, to appreciate diversity, to fight discrimination, and to prevent hate crimes. We believe a broad range of community stake holders, through dialogue and deliberation, can create the kind of inclusive communities and neighborhoods that are the best possible place to live, work, do business, play and raise our families.

**VALUE STATEMENT.** --We in .. .. value diversity. Acts of hatred and public displays of bigotry violate the values of our community; these acts cause harm and generate pain and anguish. These acts cast a shadow on our commitment to inclusiveness and equality. The impact of these acts of hatred is far-reaching and profoundly disruptive. They spread fear among our citizenry, foster negative images of our community, and inhibit economic and community development.

**MISSION STATEMENT.** --The ... Diversity Appreciation Team pledges to respond to hate crimes and acts of hate, to address the trauma of victimization; to facilitate the healing of individuals and the restoration of our community, and to promote the welfare and dignity of all our citizens.